precursor polymeric fibers by melting a proportion of the polymer of the precursor fibers, the recrystallised melt phase consisting of from 5% to 50% by weight of the polymeric material and having a melting point less than that of the molecularly oriented fiber such as to join areas of adjacent fibers to form a network or continuous three dimensional matrix which binds the fibers and filler together.

2. (Twice amended) A composite material as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the precursor fiber is of maximum length of 0.5 mm.